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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Cuba/Spain

DATE:

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SUBJECT Franco Influence in Catholic Social Action Group in Cuba

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ORIGIN

CONFIDENTIAL
This document is hereby designated CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 16 October 1973 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the

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SUPPLEMENT

1. It is reported that as a result of a number of meetings held in Cuba during May 1947 by Franco emissaries Fernando Maria Castiella y Maiz and Manuel Jimenez Quilez with two Jesuit fathers, Father Ramon Calvo, sub-Provincial of the Society of Jesus, and Father Felipe Rey de Castro of Belen College (Havana), an attempt will be made to interject Spanish influence in the conference of the new Inter-American Confederation of Catholic Social Action scheduled for September or October 1947 in Havana.
2. The Inter-American Confederation of Catholic Social Action was formed during the sessions of the First Social Week of the Caribbean held in Ciudad Trujillo, Dominican Republic, from 3 to 9 February 1947. The purpose of the organization is to provide the means for all the countries of the New World to help themselves reciprocally in the solution of the social problems of the hemisphere and to extend their aid to the Old World. It is felt that the organization is needed also to bring a Catholic contribution to the activities of the Social and Economic Council of the UN. It will be sponsored by the National Catholic Welfare Conference of Washington, D. C., and the Cuban Catholic Action.
3. The First Social Week of the Caribbean, at which the Inter-American Confederation was formed, was sponsored by the Society of Jesus, which is known to be dominated in Cuba and other Caribbean countries by persons of Spanish origin. According to source, the Spanish Jesuits continue to regard the former colonies as likely ground for the spread of Spanish politics and culture and are ardently pro-Franco. The meetings held by Castiella y Maiz and Jimenez Quilez with Fathers Calvo and Rey de Castro, as well as with two prominent pro-Falangists named Valentin Arenas y Arminan and Dr. Angel Fernandez Varela, are said to have had as their object to prepare the ground for influencing the coming conference of the Inter-American Confederation in favor of a policy of Hispanidad. It is not expected that the Catholic Church in Spain will be represented by observers at this meeting or play an official part in the proceedings, but source adds that Jimenez Quilez will return to Cuba in time for the conference, and there is a possibility that Castiella y Maiz may also return.
4. It is reported that although Cardinal Archbishop Arteaga is aware of the activities of Castiella y Maiz, Jimenez, and the other Cubans mentioned above, he feels he will be unable to take any positive action to eliminate their activities because of the great influence the Spanish priests have in Cuba and the favor which Franco and the Jesuit order are supposed to enjoy in Vatican circles. Father Raymond A. McGowan, director of the National Catholic Welfare Conference in Washington, is not aware of the planned attempt to introduce Spanish influence in the meeting of the new Confederation and, according to source, would not be sympathetic to such activities.

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